

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Every occupation is associated with one or other ill effects on health as well as oral health. The workers of the paper mill are exposed to hazardous occupational environment and the physically tedious work might drive them to neglect their oral health. **Aim:** The present study was conducted to assess the oral health status and treatment needs of paper mill workers, Namakkal, Tamil Nadu.

Methodology: A cross - sectional descriptive survey was conducted to assess the oral health status and treatment needs of 600 paper mill workers at Namakkal. The study subjects were recruited through simple random sampling technique. Data was collected using a questionnaire along with World Health Organization (WHO) Oral Health Assessment form (1997). Statistical analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

Results: Majority of the paper mill workers were males 466 (77.7%) and nearly 39% belonged to 31-45 years age group. Oral mucosal conditions were found in 31 (5.2%) workers. Dental fluorosis was found in 95 (15.8%) workers. The prevalence of dental caries was 71.5% among the workers. The mean DMFT was 4.76 ± 4.43 . Around 17% workers had CPI score 4 - 5 mm or more pocket depth and 23% had loss of attachment of 4-5 mm or more.

Conclusion: The present study population had poor oral health status with high prevalence of dental caries and periodontal disease. It has been observed that there was a lack of awareness towards oral health among the workers. Oral health education along with other preventive and curative services can be initiated by the dental health professionals to ensure optimum oral health care to the paper mill workers.

Key words: Paper mill workers, Oral health status, Treatment needs.